

Volunteer

at the Philadelphia VA Medical Center



Thank you for taking the first step to becoming a VA Volunteer! On behalf of the Philadelphia VA Medical Center, we are delighted that you are interested in volunteering at our organization.

Our mission is very unique:

"...to provide high quality health care and social services to veterans while maintaining the highest level of professional and ethical standards.

We strive for excellence in teaching and research to conquer disease and improve the quality of life of the veterans."

With a unique mission, we also have unique volunteers who bring an abundance of compassion, energy, and spirit to our veterans. Your decision to volunteer at the VA Medical Center will be very fulfilling and rewarding.

Please take a few minutes to review the enclosed information carefully and complete and return the following forms:

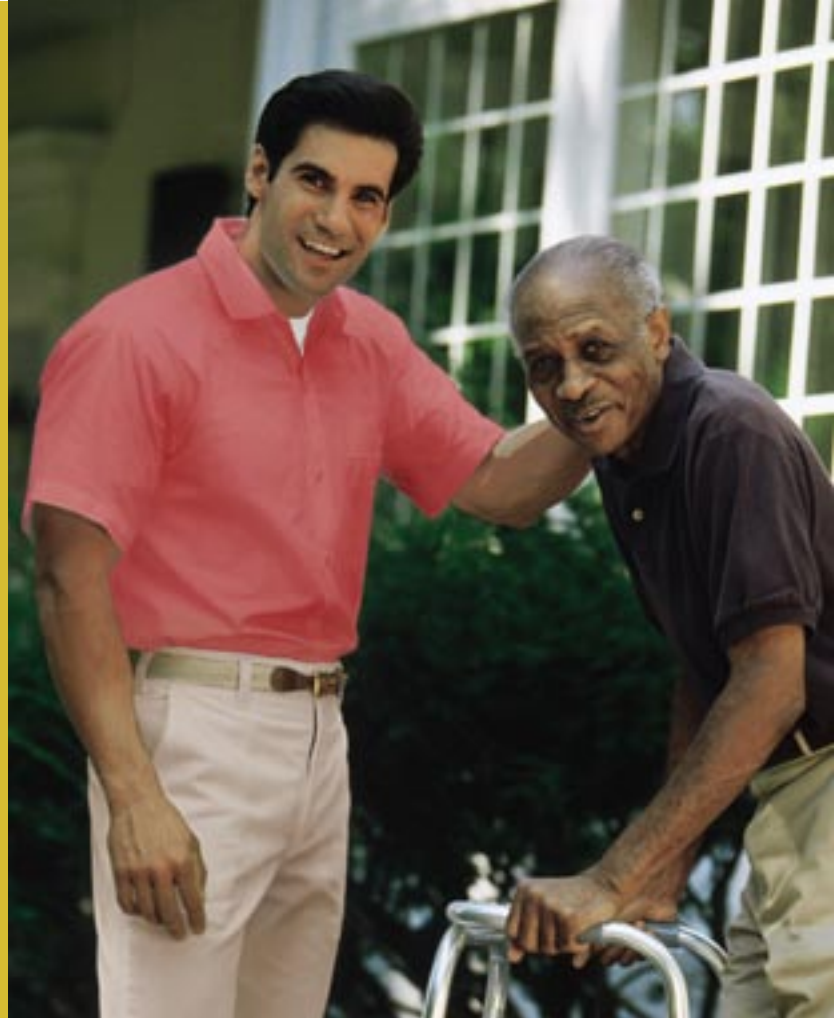
- Volunteer application
- Background check form
- Two reference forms from individuals other than relatives

For volunteer groups, please contact Voluntary Service for a group application form.

The process will begin once Voluntary Service receives all your completed forms. The first step will begin with your background check conducted by our Police and Security Service. Once the background check is returned and approved by Voluntary Service, we will contact you to schedule an interview. Interviews are conducted the second Monday and Wednesday of every month.

We look forward to meeting you and having you serve our veterans. If you have any questions, please feel free to call (215) 823-5868 or e-mail Melissa.Edonick@va.gov.

Melissa A. Edonick, MA, MS, CAVS
Chief, Voluntary Service



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteer opportunities are found in the Medical Center, Nursing Home Care Unit, and our Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (Horsham, PA; Fort Dix, NJ; Cape May, NJ; and Gloucester, NJ). Our goal is to meet the needs of our veterans while meeting your interests, skills, and talents as a volunteer.

Opportunities are categorized in the following areas:

Clerical

Volunteers provide administrative support to departments such as data entry, answering phones, running errands, assisting with department-specific projects.

Clinical

Volunteers are trained to interact with veteran patients such as reading, listening, and socializing with patients, feeding patients during mealtime, writing letters on behalf of the patient, and much more!

Community

Volunteers serve as a liaison for the incoming community (patients, visitors) and assist them with finding their way throughout the Medical Center.

TIME COMMITMENT

While any time you are able to give to our veterans is valuable, we do ask for a minimum time commitment for our volunteers.

Adult volunteers: Four (4) hours per week

College students: Three (3) hours per week

High School students: Two (2) hours per week
(afternoons only during the school year)

Don't worry! If you are unable to serve the minimum time commitment, there are other opportunities available.

If your time availability only allows you to volunteer a few hours a month, we will categorize you as an occasional volunteer. Opportunities are available at the Nursing Home Care Unit and the Evening Leisure Program hosted by Recreation Therapy.

Still tight on time? Well, we have more opportunities to choose from!

If you are affiliated with a group (Fraternity, Sorority, Boy Scouts, Service Organization like the Veterans of Foreign Wars, or even your place of employment, etc.), we have opportunities for you!

Organizations visit our veteran residents at the Nursing Home (located right across the street from the Medical Center). Here's what has been done so far: Bingo games, ice cream socials, "happy hour," summer cookouts, entertainment, and much more. Organizations come in as a group and with assistance from Recreation Therapy, assist with the event!

Contact Voluntary Service for additional opportunities!

DONATIONS

Okay, so you don't have time to volunteer, but STILL want to help our veterans? We can always use donations – both monetary and gifts-in-kind.

Monetary

Monetary gifts are placed in our General Post Funds (money designated to use only for our veterans). The following General Post Funds need continuous funding:

- **Television Fund**
Monies used to purchase TVs at the Medical Center and Nursing Home
- **National Games**
*Golden Age and Wheelchair Games
Sponsorship needed for veteran participants*
- **Admission Kits**
Funds used to purchase needed items such as soap, toothbrush, shampoo
- **Canteen Books**
Funds used to purchase Canteen Books which patients can use to purchase items in the retail store. The books have a monetary value of \$1.00.
- **General Purpose**
Funds used to purchase needed items for veterans, sponsor day trips, food events
- **Nursing Home General Purpose**

- **Mental Hygiene Ongoing Therapy Program**
Funds used to purchase tokens for the Homeless Veterans Program
- There are additional General Post Funds. If you wish to inquire about other funds, please contact Voluntary Service

Gifts-in-Kind

While a monetary donation may not be feasible at this time for you, Voluntary Service is always in need of donated items for our veterans. The items are distributed to our hospitalized veterans in the hospital (including the clinics) and residents at the Nursing Home. Below is a list to give you an idea of what types of donations are needed and accepted:

- Toiletries: *Soap, shampoo, shaving cream, razors, small packets of tissues, mouthwash, toothpaste, toothbrush, combs, brushes, socks, etc.*
- Games and Puzzles (new preferred)
Decks of cards, board games, etc.
- Books and Magazines
*Large print is also recommended.
Religious magazines/books are not permitted*
- Lap robes
- Stationery and pens
- If you have an idea about a specific item, please contact Voluntary Service.



“IT IS ONE OF THE
MOST BEAUTIFUL COM-
PENSATIONS OF THIS
LIFE THAT NO MAN
CAN SINCERELY TRY TO
HELP ANOTHER WITH-
OUT HELPING HIM-
SELF.”

- RALPH WALDO EMERSON

ORGANIZATIONAL VOLUNTEERING

Elementary School and High School

Our veterans love to get cards. Why not create cards all year round (Veterans Day, Memorial Day, Thanksgiving, etc.). They can be placed on the meal trays for our patients. You could start a book drive, magazine drive, or even a food drive (call Voluntary Service for an approved list of food to be donated).

Colleges and Universities

Not sure what to do on a Sunday afternoon during football season? Why not sponsor a football party and watch the game with our veterans? We also have a Veteran's History Project where you are trained to interview veterans and their story is forwarded to the Library of Congress. Perfect for English and History majors!

Businesses and Service Organizations

Has your business experienced the rewards of a company sponsored volunteer program? What a great way to get to know your colleagues and to help others. Businesses could sponsor a “happy hour” on Thursday or a summer cookout at our Nursing Home. Voluntary Service can provide you with specific group opportunities.

These opportunities are only a snapshot of what can be done for our veterans!

Call Voluntary Service, (215) 823-5868, today to discuss your options for our veterans at the Philadelphia VA Medical Center.



VOLUNTARY SERVICE OFFICE

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